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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/870,239	05/30/2001	Tie Lan	28682/71114	8818

4743 7590 07/16/2003

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[REDACTED]
EXAMINER

WYROZEBSKI LEE, KATARZYNA I

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1714	//

DATE MAILED: 07/16/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/870,239	LAN ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Katarzyna Wyrozebski Lee	1714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 May 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-15 and 17-30 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 22-30 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-15 and 17-21 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

In the light of the applicant's amendment mailed on May 19, 2003 following final office action has been necessitated.

Newly submitted claims 22-30 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: Original claims were reciting intercalate, exfoliate and process for making it. New claims are reciting an article.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 22-30 withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

It should be pointed out that since the claims are dependent on the originally filed claims, if the application becomes in condition for allowance, per applicant's request these claims will be rejoined. Otherwise, the claims will have to be cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

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2. Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Barbee (US 6,384,121).

The discussion of the disclosure of the prior art of Barbee from paragraph 7 of the previous office action mailed on 2/19/2003 is incorporated here by reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

4. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

5. Claims 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barbee (US 6,384,121).

The discussion of the disclosure of the prior art of Barbee from paragraph 11 of the office action mailed on 2/23/2003 is incorporated here by reference. Newly added claims 20 and 22 recite limitation of titration, which is already disclosed in claims 18 and 19.

In the response mailed on May 19, 2003 the applicant has argued following:

a) The present invention does not include step of washing cationically exchanged clay.

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With respect to the above argument, the examiner would like to point out couple of issues. In product by process claims, it is the product that carries the patentable weight. Second although the prior art of Barbee may say that the clay once cationically exchanged can be washed to remove excess cations, specifically col. 12, lines 34-36, but they do not have to be. In fact, the examples of the prior art of Barbee do not at all disclose washing step. Cationically exchanged clay is filtered so that it can be used with composition with polymers. Such is also supported in col 12, lines 15-26). In addition, the same col. 12, line 34, discloses that the amount of organic cation is in fact utilized in excess of 0.5-2 equivalent, preferably 1.0 to 1.5 equivalents. Therefore, if the examples do not disclose washing step, the organic cations will inherently not be removed. Well, I guess Barbee may just get lucky.... since most of the cations are exchanged. With ratio of clay : cation of 1:1 chances of having less than 5% of extractable cations are pretty good.

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

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however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Katarzyna Wyrozebski Lee whose telephone number is (703) 306-5875. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 6:30 AM-4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vasu Jagannathan can be reached on (703) 306-2777. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

KIWL
July 9, 2003

EDWARD J. CAIN
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 1500

